

ATTORNEY GENERAL SIX RECOGNIZES AMBER ALERT AWARENESS DAY

Attorney General Steve Six today recognizes National Amber Alert Awareness Day. Nationally, this program has successfully brought 492 children home safely since its inception in 1996, and 19 Kansas children since 2002.

“The Kansas AMBER Alert Program is an important tool law enforcement uses when necessary to keep Kansas children safe,” Six said. “My office continues to make efforts to improve the program and make sure law enforcement officers are trained on the policies and procedures.”

The AMBER Alert system began when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed with local police to develop an early warning system to help find abducted children. The system was created in memory of nine-year-old Amber Hagerman of Arlington, Texas, who was abducted while riding her bicycle and later found murdered. AMBER Alerts are emergency messages broadcast when a law enforcement agency determines that a child has been abducted and is in imminent danger.

The Kansas Amber Alert Program originated in the fall of 2002 and the first Kansas alert occurred in 2003. Thus far, there have been 18 alerts involving 19 children. While several parents were unfortunately killed when their children were abducted, all 19 children were recovered safely.

The Attorney General’s Office has provided regional trainings for law enforcement officers and victim advocates to keep them up-to-date on the program’s policies and procedures. The Kansas AMBER Alert Task Force, coordinated through the Attorney General’s Office, continues to improve Kansas’s ability to respond when a child is abducted. The goal is to make the response both swift and seamless.

A child abduction is every parent’s worst nightmare. A prompt response can mean the difference between life and death. When a child is abducted, Six encourages the public to be vigilant. The success of this program rests largely on a quick response by the general public in providing tips to law enforcement. As a Kansan, you can help by doing the following:

- **PAY ATTENTION WHEN YOU HEAR OR SEE AN AMBER ALERT.** Take a good look at the information provided. It could be that it is a tip from you that saves a child’s life.
- **MAKE A MENTAL COMPARISON OF THOSE YOU SEE AND THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE ALERT.** Don’t let the information slip your mind.
- **SIGN UP FOR AUTOMATIC CELL-PHONE AMBER NOTIFICATION.** A secondary distribution effort undertaken in partnership with wireless companies, online service providers, and other private and public entities enables AMBER Alerts to be sent directly to the public. You can sign up today through wirelessamberalerts.org
- **WATCH FOR HIGHWAY ALERTS.** By partnering with Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas has AMBER Alerts displayed on marquees on various highways now, to improve awareness when an AMBER Alert is initiated.